GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN

Published Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

(The National Geographic Society is a scientific and educational Society, wholly altruistic, incorporated under the Federal law as a non-commercial institution for the increase of geographic knowledge and its popular diffusion.)

General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

CONTENTS FOR WEEK OF MAY 5, 1924. Vol. III. No. 9

1. British Honduras: Where a Great Maya City Has Been Found.
2. Libraries: From the Broker's in Nippur to the Banker's in New York.
3. Khiva's Capital, Khiva, Besieged.
4. Katmai Has a New Show for World Flyers.
5. Samoa: "Pearl of the Pacific."

© National Geographic Society.

HOW MOUNT KATMAI SPRINKLED A SHIP WITH VOLCANIC ASH

For two days following the eruption ash fell over a great area in southern Alaska. Although the decks of the Revenue Cutter *Manning* were cleared every few hours, drifts of ash accumulated. The sun was darkened so that midday was no different from midnight. This ship is anchored at Kodiak, near the place where Major F. L. Martin, commander of the round-the-world flight, was forced to land. (See Bulletin No. 4).

HOW TO OBTAIN THE BULLETIN

The Geographic News Bulletin is published weekly throughout the school year (thirty issues) and will be mailed to teachers for one year upon receipt of 25 cents (in stamps or money order). Entered as second-class matter, January 27, 1922, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized February 9, 1922.

GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN

Published Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

(Founded in 1888 for the Increase and Diffusion of Geographic Knowledge)

General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

British Honduras: Where a Great Maya City Has Been Found.

BELIZE, isolated capital of British Honduras, has become a focus point of geographic interest by virtue of the rediscovery in the Honduran jungle of the hitherto little known ruins of a great Maya city, the dominating structure of which is a pyramid 300 feet high. The capital of the bit of British soil in Central America was the base of operations for the searchers and will probably be the headquarters of expeditions for the excavation of America's newest Luxor.

Although it is one of the least known and most neglected patches of the British Empire, still British law and order hover over Belize, and it is, to a certain extent, like the Dutch West Indian colony of Curacao, an asylum for alien leaders who were more revolutionary than successful.

Coal-Black Policemen Dressed Like "Bobbies"

The country's 45,000 inhabitants include probably less than 1,000 whites. The remainder of the population is made up of negroes and mulattoes and Spanish Indians, the latter living chiefly in the back country. But in the capital, throughout the whole coast country, and wherever governmental machinery has been set up, the atmosphere, whether it be made up of business, government, or sport, is unmistakably British.

Few concessions have been made to the climate. The two- and three-story houses that line the main residence street of Belize are of accepted British architecture. Coal-black policemen are clothed much like the London "Bobby," and bewigged and begowned judges sit in the courts. In the open spaces cricket matches will often be found in progress, and boxing bouts are favored by the negroes, over the cock-fights and bull-fights of their Latinized neighbors.

Names Tell Story of Anglicizing the Spanish Main

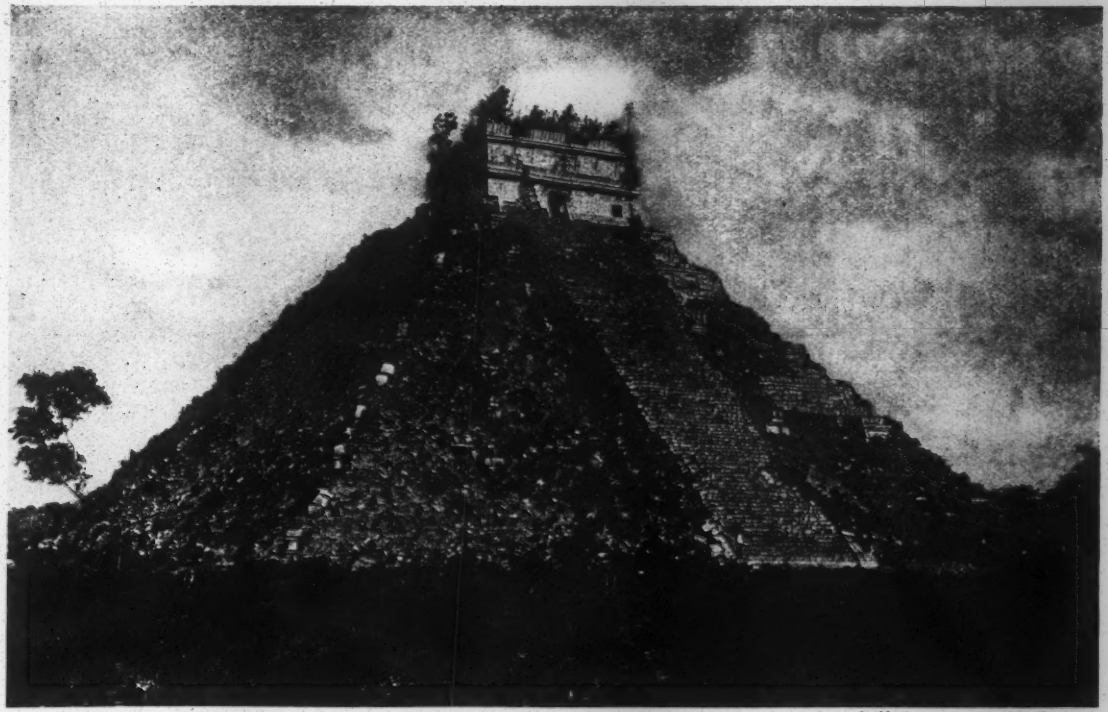
Geographic names tell of the sudden transition from the lands of Spanish culture to this little patch of the Spanish Main that has been Anglicized. One leaves Puerto Cortez, Honduras, or Puerto Barrios, Guatemala, to sail a few miles farther on past the Cockcomb Mountains, All Pines, and Stann Creek. Inland are Middlesex and Orange Walk. Belize is one of the few exceptions and even that is said to be a corruption of the surname of an early Scotch settler, Wallis. Direct English nomenclature reaches its apex in Belize where the ferry is called "the haul-over."

British Honduras, a trifle larger than Massachusetts or New Jersey, is wedged in between the Mexican States of the Yucatan Peninsula on the north and Guatemala on the west and south, while Honduras, Nicaragua, Salvador, and Costa Rica are nearby. It is due west of Jamaica, some 600 miles across the Caribbean, and has always been to a certain extent under the wing of that British island.

A City Built on Mahogany Chips

The mahogany industry is justly commemorated on the flag of British Honduras by the representation there of the tools of the trade. Mahogany

UMI



© National Geographic Society.

THE PYRAMID TEMPLE OF EL CASTILLO, YUCATAN

This is one of the finest pyramid temples in all Mexico. It is 80 feet high and 200 feet square at its base. It fronts a little east of due north and has stairways on all four sides. The walls of the temple which occupy the apex are 3 feet thick and are of plain masonry, but the pillars and portals are covered with sculpture in relief. A curious, warlike, human figure and colossal serpent heads are frequently repeated in the scheme of decoration, and the temple was possibly dedicated to the war god of the Itzas. (See Bulletin No. 1.)

GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN

Published Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

(Founded in 1888 for the Increase and Diffusion of Geographic Knowledge)

General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

Libraries: From the Broker's in Nippur to the Banker's in New York

WHILE far from the greatest in point of numbers, the J. Pierpont Morgan library of New York, recently given by the American banker to the public, is undoubtedly one of the most remarkable libraries of all time. Most great libraries, from the Ptolemic libraries to the Congressional, have been collections of relatively contemporary material. The Morgan library ranges over the whole field of man's written history, treasuring remaining masterpieces or invaluable remnants of each period.

Though the movement to get the greatest amount of literature into the hands of the most people is just getting under way in some countries, and in others is yet to be started, libraries existed for thousands of years before the birth of Christ, and they have constantly commanded the interest of king, priest, and layman.

The Morgan Library of Nippur

Four thousand years ago the firm of Murashu Sons, bankers and brokers at Nippur, Assyria, comparable in their status in that country to the Rothschilds in England and the house of Morgan in the United States, stacked in their business archives clay tablets written before the era of Abraham which recorded hundreds of their transactions.

Ashurbanipal who died in 626 B. C. had at Nineveh a library which had been classified and arranged according to the subject matter of the tablets, each series being given a number and a title composed as a general rule of the first words of the first tablet. The king sent out his scribes to all the temples and schools of Babylonia and Assyria and had them make copies of the tablets in the then modern Assyrian language. The story of the Deluge now in the J. Pierpont Morgan library, which is dated about 2000 B. C., is clearly a copy of an older version.

A "Dispensary of the Mind" in Thebes Temple

The Egyptians too had their libraries. Behind the hall of columns of the Rameseum at Thebes, was the Sacred Library called the "Dispensary of the Mind." It had an astronomical ceiling on which the twelve Egyptian months were represented and its walls showed a procession of priests carrying the sacred arks. Its circle of 365 cubits, each representing a day of the year, was carried off by the Persians and is therefore lost to us except through the description of Diodorus.

The Greeks probably had a few private libraries during the fifth and fourth centuries B. C., but we know little of their character. But to the later history of the Greeks are accredited two of the greatest of the ancient libraries of the world. The first of the Ptolemies collected the twin libraries at Alexandria containing 700,000 volumes carefully arranged and catalogued, which were burned when Julius Caesar set fire to the shipping in the harbor. The great library of Pergamum in Asia Minor, which Plutarch says contained 200,000 volumes, was ultimately sent to Alexandria as a gift to Cleopatra from Anthony, with the view of making good in some measure the loss which had been caused by Caesar.

UMI

lured early settlers to Belize; put money in their purses; furnished something for them and their backer, Great Britain, to fight the Spaniards about; and has always been chiefly responsible for the land's main industry, lumbering.

The people of the colony even tell solemnly how the lowest portions of the city of Belize, once a seemingly bottomless swamp, have been filled in and made usable by the millions of mahogany chips hacked there from logs which must be roughly squared before they are ready for market.

British Honduras came under the British flag largely through the well-known "squatters' rights," grown to international stature. Spain claimed the entire "Main," or mainland, from the time of the earliest explorers. But she was interested chiefly in gold and silver: mere trees seemed beneath notice. So British and other pioneers who cut timber on the eastern coast of Yucatan, the present British Honduras, and the Mosquito Indian country, farther south, were not molested at first.

When the settlers were seen to be making a good thing of their mahogany trade, the Spanish changed their policy and began harassing them. A series of wars and treaties between Spain and Great Britain followed. In 1798 the Spanish made a supreme effort to drive what they considered the "squatters" out of Belize. But the settlers, with cannon mounted on rafts and flat-boats, had the best of the strategic situation and won a signal victory. In 1862 the "settlement" was declared a "colony" and was given a lieutenant governor acting under the governor of Jamaica. In 1884 it was made a separate crown colony.

Raw Material for America's Restless Jaws

British Honduras, like the other countries along the east side of Central America, has a low-lying region along the coast with highlands farther inland. Its dense tropical forests have discouraged agriculture. Growth is so rapid that it is a task of the utmost difficulty to keep trails open. Most travel is along rivers, and little is known of the interior away from the streams. The one important exception is the southern region tapped by the only railroad, along which thousands of acres of banana plantations have been established to supply a part of the market in the United States. Down the river millions of dollars' worth of mahogany and log-wood have been floated during the life of the colony. In late years tens of thousands of bales of chicle, the raw material of chewing-gum, have joined the stream, to be shipped north to keep busy the restless jaws of America.

For this outflow to America there is an inflow not wholly confined to money and goods. Some local leaders complain that the colony is becoming "Americanized." Newspapers and magazines from the United States far outnumber those from England. The official money unit of the colony is the American gold dollar.

GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN

Published Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

(Founded in 1888 for the Increase and Diffusion of Geographic Knowledge)

General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

Khiva's Capital, Khiva, Besieged

KHIVA, in the heart of Turkestan, is reported besieged by revolutionists. The news refers to the city of Khiva, which is the capital of the Central Asian state of Khiva. Events have been moving fast in this dependency of the Soviet for the news of revolution follows on the heels of news that Khiva had received a new constitution. That, however, did not matter much since it meant little more than that the dependency had decided to call itself "The Soviet Socialist Republic of Khiva," instead of "The People's Socialist Republic of Khiva."

Powerful When William Conquered England

Khiva, like several other countries in the heart of Asia now of little consequence, is a relic of past greatness. Its king felt a hunger for more land and power at the time that appetite stirred William the Conqueror, and he made himself the biggest factor of his day in central and southwestern Asia, extending his country around the Sea of Aral and even conquering Persia and Afghanistan. But by the time Russia began her conquests in Asia the former great Empire of Khiva had been smashed by other Asiatics, and the Khivans occupied a tight little triangle in the delta of the Oxus just south of Aral. The conquering of Khiva was probably the most difficult assignment Russia's Cossacks ever had. For several centuries every Russian expedition sent against these desert-hemmed fighters was wholly destroyed or its members made slaves. The country was finally subdued in 1873 and, while retaining the semblance of autonomy, became a dependency of Russia.

Soviet Announced Khiva Was "Not Ripe"

Under the present Russian government, Khiva's status has undergone little change. When autonomous republics were being formed all around it, it was announced to be "not ripe" for complete autonomy and undiluted socialism, and was kept under the direct supervision of Moscow as a dependency.

The Khivan oasis near the mouth of the famous Oxus has been irrigated and farmed for more than 2,000 years. Not far from this region, it is believed, many of the domestic fruits known to man were developed; and they have been grown in plots moistened by Oxus water as far back as the history of the region can be traced. The art of irrigation itself is thought to have been born on the banks of the Oxus quite as early as in Egypt or Mesopotamia.

Emperors Sought Melons From Khiva

One thing for which Khiva is famous all over Asia is its melons which are credited with a deliciousness of flavor and a delicacy and richness of odor not approached by melons grown elsewhere. In their climate in which winter comes on suddenly, the Khivans early learned much about cold storage that the technicians of the Western world came to know only recently. They suspend melons, grapes and other fruits in a room kept slightly above the freezing point and preserve their freshness and flavor throughout the winter. In the past gourmet emperors of China sent regularly across the endless plains and mountains of

UMI

Goths Thought Reading Would Weaken Athens

At any rate the Athenians had become book-lovers by the time of the invasion of the Goths, for it is related that one of the Gothic chiefs, on finding some of his soldiers on the point of burning libraries of Athens, told them to leave the books to the effeminate Greeks, as the hands accustomed to the smooth papyrus would feebly grasp the brand of the warrior.

Under the Greeks the parchment used in making the scrolls was so greatly improved that by Roman times a good many varieties were to be found on the market, and the Egyptian ink in use then has much of its ancient gloss and freshness today. In fact, inkstands for two colors of writing fluid much like those we use have been excavated from the ruins of both Pompeii and Herculaneum, and one from the latter city contained ink, which, though somewhat thick, could still be used for writing.

Though Rome was slow to develop an interest in literature and her first libraries were those which she took as spoils of war, by Imperial times the library facilities of the city were far ahead of those of modern Europe before the middle of the eighteenth century.

Constantine the Great founded in 336 B. C. a library at Constantinople which grew under his successors until it contained one or two hundred thousand volumes, among the more valuable manuscripts being the only authentic account of the proceedings of the Council of Nice and a manuscript of Homer written in letters of gold on serpents' skin which measured 120 feet in length. Despite the fact that several fires played havoc with the collection, from this library have come some of the choicest treasures now to be found in the libraries of Europe.

Bibliothèque National Largest Today

Another library which lost some of its treasures to 30 of the great libraries of Europe and others in oblivion was the famed Corvina, collected by the witty, attractive, and scholarly Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary in 1460. This collection of more than 50,000 manuscripts, probably the largest and finest of its kind ever made in Europe, was the hobby of a monarch of taste and discrimination. But the Turks in 1527 rifled the rich halls it occupied in the castle of Buda and scattered its precious contents over the continent.

Among present day libraries the Bibliothèque Nationale, at Paris, with its more than 5,000,000 printed books, 500,000 maps, 110,000 manuscripts, and over 1,000,000 prints, easily outstrips all others for first place.

The British Museum Library claims second honors for size and an even score with its rival on the value of its contents.

The Library of Congress, at Washington, with its more than 3,000,000 volumes, stands third upon the list of the world's great libraries.

Arab "Loose Leaf" Libraries for Convenience

But there are almost as many libraries of peculiar kinds as there are races of men. The Arab libraries, consisting for the most part of works on theology, jurisprudence, and philology are attached to their mosques, are seldom read and rapidly fall into decay. The leaves of the books are not often sewed together, but usually are placed loose in a leather or pasteboard cover. The argument is that several persons can use the same book at the same time, each taking a handful of leaves. The Buddhist writings in the temples of eastern Tibet are printed from blocks such as were first used in China, or are written by hand. The Buddhist scriptures of Siam were written by some devotee with brass and iron stiles upon the leaves of the Talipot palm, and each leaf wrapped in yellow cloth or silk. They are read only on special occasions.

At Merton, the oldest of the colleges of Oxford University, some of the books are chained to the shelves. Among the rich medieval manuscripts of the library at Vatopethi on Mt. Athos, Greece, there is a curious old geography of the eleventh century after Strabo and Ptolemy, containing some extraordinary maps.

GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN

Published Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

(Founded in 1888 for the Increase and Diffusion of Geographic Knowledge)

General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

Katmai Has a New Show for World Flyers

THE AMERICAN round-the-world flyers, in passing along the Aleutian Islands from North America to Asia had on their route Katmai volcano, which blew off its head in 1912 in the greatest eruption of modern times and, if they were not too far from its crater, they saw one of the latest phenomena of that Alaskan world wonder, mud volcanoes.

It was the scientific interest in Katmai's eruption which led the National Geographic Society to send an expedition there—and this expedition discovered the world famous Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes.

Mud volcanoes and geysers are in most cases progeny of lava and ash-emitting volcanoes—second and third generation offspring, as it were, of a patriarch whose strain is losing its virility. The old lava-flows near the surface solidify, choke off the possibility of major eruptions for a time at least, leaving, perhaps, only little crevices through which steam generated farther down may push upward in numerous jets.

Where the Mud Comes From

If these vents pass through rock, ordinary fumaroles or steaming cracks are formed on the surface. But if the steam passes through clay or shale or fine volcanic dust on its way to the surface these will absorb moisture, become creamy mud, and tend to flow into the crevices. The steam pressure pushes the mud upward and eventually throws it out of the vent at the surface more or less violently. In the course of time the mud thrust out at the surface builds up a cone, large or small according to the volume of steam and mud.

Most of the world's mud volcanoes are little fellows, less than a yard high; and their aggregate number is very great since they occur in many places on the various continents. Not all of them, apparently, are in regions of former volcanic activity, and it is the belief of some students of the subject that chemical reactions below the surface are a second source of the phenomenon. One place where such a cause is thought to have produced mud volcanoes is in the delta of the Colorado River, just south of the California line where numbers of the little beehive-like mud mounds occur; and perhaps those of the Russian Crimea are of similar origin. Sometimes the little Etnas of mud are associated with petroleum and asphalt deposits, as near Baku in Asia and on the island of Trinidad off the northern shores of South America.

Costa Rica Has Greatest Mud Volcano

Large mud volcanoes such as that reported in Katmai's crater are relatively rare. The largest and most active hitherto known of what may loosely be called "mud volcanoes" is in the crater of Poas, Costa Rica, not far from the city of San José. Poas might as truly be classified as a giant geyser. It consists of a lake of mud and water in the bottom of a crater half a mile wide and 800 feet deep. As in a geyser the eruptions occur at more or less regular intervals, varying in this case from 12 to 20 minutes. Sometimes the water will merely

UMI

central Asia to Khiva for supplies of melons for their tables. These expeditions probably set the world record for the transportation of fresh fruits in the days before the development of artificial refrigeration. Before the World War the Khivan oasis produced cotton in considerable quantities for Russia, but since the disruption of the market its farmers have largely returned to grain growing. Silk production is of importance and the oasis is lined with long avenues of mulberry trees on which the silk worms feed.

Hemmed in by deserts, Khiva is still isolated in spite of the extensive Russian railroad building in the Trans-Caspian region in the decades before the World War. The country is enclosed in a great horseshoe of railroads, but at no place does the track approach closer than 250 miles to the city of Khiva. The country is dependent as of old on boat traffic on the Oxus for part of the year and on camel and horse caravans. Mohammedanism prevails throughout the country which is roughly about half the size of the State of New York.

Bulletin No. 3, May 5, 1924.

© National Geographic Society.

A GROUP OF CHILDREN FROM SIX STATES FORMING A HAPPY CIRCLE IN OVERLAND PARK CAMP GROUNDS, DENVER, COLORADO

Hundreds of cities and towns have provided camps for tourists, most of them equipped with electric lights, kitchens and sanitary conveniences, and provided with police protection. One Missouri town of 7,000 inhabitants recently made a count. Its citizens welcomed 23,520 cars, carrying 100,000 passengers, during the touring season. More than 3,000 cars, carrying 12,000 passengers, stopped at the town's free camping site.

GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN

Published Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

(Founded in 1888 for the Increase and Diffusion of Geographic Knowledge)

General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

Samoa: "Pearl of the Pacific"

SAMOA, while typical of other island groups in the South Pacific, has particular interest to America since the United States owns a part of it. The portion of it that is American is reported restive under the type of government now provided. At present direction of the island affairs is intrusted to the Navy.

Romantic glamour has been attached to Samoa ever since Robert Louis Stevenson penned his "Footnote to History" and "Vailima Letters." Other visitors than Stevenson sing most extravagant praises of Samoa's charms.

Soda Fountain Effect on the Coast

Unusual physical features have much to do with the happy first impression Samoa makes upon its guests. The islands are surrounded, in large part, by coral reefs. These mark out the ribbons of placid water—canals of amethystine blue—which skirt the shore lines.

On Savaii, largest island of the group, is a volcano which began an eruption in 1905 and continued for four years. Volcanoes are responsible for the queer syphon effects along the exposed coast of Tutuila and the southern shores of Savaii. Liquid lava cooled in masses overhangs the ocean, forming caves with vertical fissures. Giant billows beat upon these caves, forcing water and air to emerge in soda fountain fashion, through the upright funnels.

Jet black rocks mark a part of the Tutuila coast, and the white foam of the breakers against these affords another striking natural spectacle.

The first enemy territory to be occupied by the British in the World War was Samoa. Upon arrival of New Zealand forces the Germans announced they would neither surrender nor resist. Announcement was made in the Reichstag that "the Pearl of the Pacific" had been invaded.

The people of the island add to its lure—whether it be the natives, pure Polynesians of splendid physique and character unspoiled by alien stock; or the beach combers, those living story books of the South Seas.

Queer Political Campaign Methods

Dainty Miss America daubs her nose with a powder puff when she goes forth to conquer; the Samoan belle oils or greases her head and body from the waist up when she appears in evening dress. A closer likeness arises, however, when the latter bleaches her hair with lime, or stains it with red clay.

Not only are Samoans physically attractive; they are mentally alert, tractable, and bear no grudges, though easily swayed by emotions. One phase of their social organization, a sort of communism which calls for the sharing of any property with him who asks for it, is accounted a handicap in efforts to better their condition. But it has been said facetiously that their political campaign methods might be worthy of emulation. For when a leader of a movement desires to gain support he goes to the abode of the head man of the opposing faction, prostrates himself, and goes through many postures of humiliation, until assent is forthcoming. However, denial of the petitioner is considered an insult and may lead to fighting.

UMI

bubble up slightly in the center of the lake, giving off steam. At other times a column of mud and water will be thrown 1,000 or more feet in the air.

Poas demonstrates still further its hybrid nature by displaying at times the characteristics of a real volcano. In 1910 an eruption occurred which went far beyond the mud and water stage, pouring out thousands of tons of ash or sand as well as hurling large fragments of rock high into the air.

© National Geographic Society.

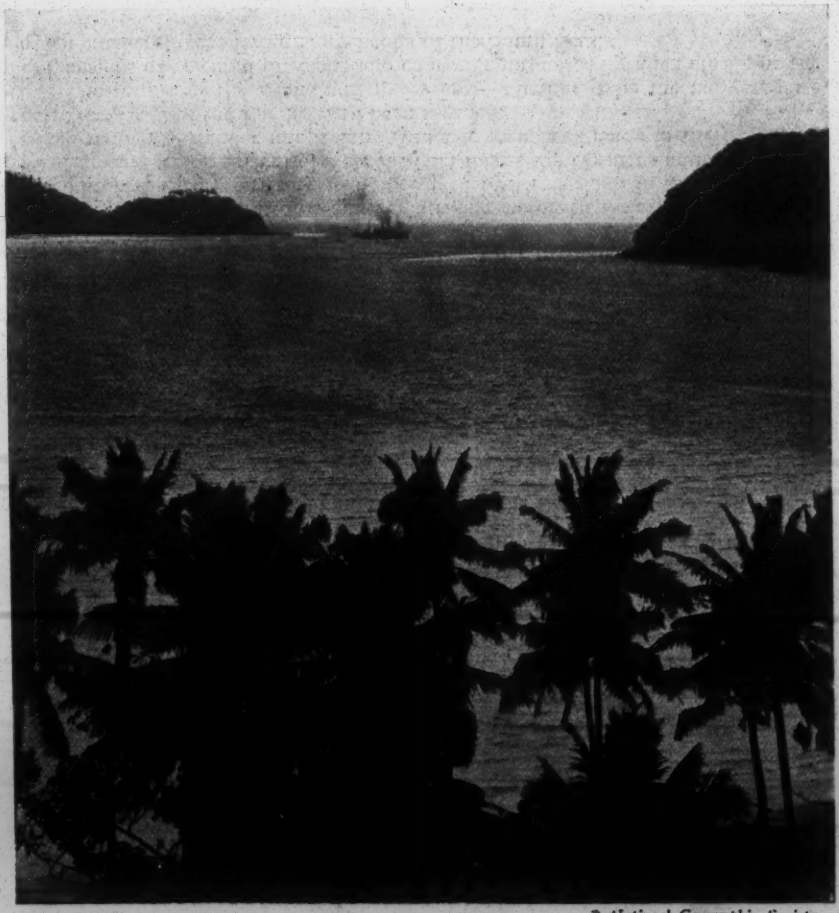
YEARS OF CARE ARE REPRESENTED IN EACH RUG. (See Bulletin No. 3.)

One of the Safest Harbors In the South Seas

Of the fourteen Samoan islands, but four are important. Of these four, Savaii, the largest, and Upolu, the most valuable commercially, now are under New Zealand mandate. Tutuila and Manua are possessions of the United States. Tutuila is reckoned the most beautiful of the group, but its significance, especially in view of present day political interest in the Pacific, lies in its possession of one of the best and safest harbors in all the South Seas.

The establishment of a naval station at Pago Pago, on Tutuila, was not the first contact of the American Navy with Samoa. Rear-Admiral Charles Wilkes, discoverer of the Antarctic Continent, to whom was paid belated recognition when a monument to him was unveiled in Arlington National Cemetery a few years ago, made surveys of the islands on his famous Pacific voyages.

Bulletin No. 5, May 5, 1924.



© *National Geographic Society.*

ENTRANCE TO PAGO PAGO HARBOR, U. S. NAVAL BASE IN THE SAMOAN ISLANDS

This harbor on the island of Tutuila occupies the crater of an extinct volcano and is one-and-a-half miles in length and three-quarters of a mile wide. The entrance from the sea is a very narrow channel. (See Bulletin No. 5).